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U. S. STATEMENTS WARNING OF DANGERS OF LINKING U. S. - SOVIET ECONOMIC RELATIONS TO EMIGRATION: 1972 - 1975

ZIEGLER BRIEFING,
NEW YORK, AFTER
PRESIDENT NIXON'S MEETING WITH
AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS

SEPTEMBER 26, 1972

There was some discussion, again, in regard to the matter relating to exit of individuals from the Soviet Union. The President pointed out that he understood the deep feelings about this matter and, indeed, shared the human concern involved in relation to people moving freely, and as they choose. He pointed out that it was his view that this problem cannot be solved by entering into harsh confrontation with the Soviet Union, because this type of approach would only serve to be counter-productive and would, the President said it was his view, end up hurting instead of helping the various individuals who are posed with this particular problem.

The President went on to point out that he does not intend to politicize the matter of the exit of Jews from the Soviet Union, and does not feel that the appropriate approach to the problem, as I said earlier, is through public confrontation. He went on to state that the Soviet Union is well aware of the views of the United States in relation to this matter, and the appropriate way to deal with this matter is through diplomatic channels, and that it would serve no purpose to politicize or demagogue about this matter.

PRESIDENT NIXON'S MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS
ON THE PROPOSED TRADE REFORM ACT
APRIL, 10, 1973

This new authority would enable us to carry out the trade agreement we have negotiated with the Soviet Union and thereby ensure that country's repayment of its lend-lease debt. It would also enable us to fulfill our commitment to Romania and to take advantage of opportunities to conclude beneficial agreements with other countries which do not now receive most-favored-nation treatment.

In the case of the Soviet Union, I recognize the deep concern which many in the Congress have expressed over the tax levied on Soviet citizens wishing to emigrate to new countries. However, I do not believe that a policy of denying most-favored-nation treatment to Soviet exports is a proper or even an effective way of dealing with this problem.

ZIEGLER BRIEFING
AT THE WHITE HOUSE AFTER
PRESIDENT NIXON'S MEETING WITH
AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS
APRIL 19, 1973

The meeting with the leaders from the Jewish community lasted an hour and 10 minutes, and in this meeting today, as was the case in the meeting with the Congressional leaders yesterday that I mentioned, the President said to the leaders of the Jewish community that the United States has had constructive communications with the Soviet leadership on the emigration of Soviet Jews.

The President told the Jewish leadership that he could confirm the fact, as reported yesterday from comments of Senators on the Hill, that the communications we have received from the Soviet Union state that the Soviet Union will exempt Soviet citizens who have received permission to emigrate from refunding the educational expenses required by the August 3rd decree.

In today's meeting, the President indicated to the Jewish leaders that he was pleased with the communications from the Soviet leaders and informed them of this constructive step and reiterated to them his feeling about the importance of United States-Soviet trade and our overall efforts to reduce world tensions. The meeting, I think, was a very frank session and very worthwhile from the standpoint of everyone who attended.

KISSINGER NEWS CONFERENCE
SAN CLEMENTE
JUNE 25, 1973

Dr. Kissinger: No, we believe that the granting of most-favored-nation status to the Soviet Union is important for the development of large-scale trade, and it is extremely important to the development of Soviet-American relations. This was part of the series of understandings in a whole complex of relationships between us and the Soviet Union last year, and it would cast serious doubt on our ability to perform our side of understandings and agreements if in each case that part of an agreement that is carried out later by one side or the other is then made the subject of additional conditions that were not part of the original negotiation. And therefore I would say that for both symbolic and substantive reasons, and substantively both economic and political, it would be very unfortunate if the request to grant most-favored-nation status to the Soviet Union, which means nondiscriminatory status vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, were not granted.

KISSINGER CONFIRMATION HEARINGS, SFRC

SEPTEMBER 7, 10, 1973

Mr. KISSINGER. The administration has favored very strongly the granting of most-favored-nation status to the Soviet Union, or the granting of authority to the President to grant most-favored-nation status to the Soviet Union. This is an issue that should not be seen simply in the narrow terms of most favored nation but in the whole context of our relationship with the Soviet Union, in which we made a series of agreements for which the quid pro quo on our side was the readiness to extend it, and where now the refusal to grant most-favored-nation status after the Soviet Union had performed on its side would raise very serious questions about the possibility of long-term arrangements between our two countries. Most-favored-nation status really only means that the Soviet Union should be treated like any other country; it is not extending a particularly favored status on them. So our view is that most-favored-nation status should be granted.

Senator AIKEN. So you believe that the extension of the most-favored-nation privileges to Russia would have a very beneficial effect, both upon our economic and political situation in the world?

Mr. KISSINGER. We believe it is an essential part of the policy of relaxation of tension that we have pursued.

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Mr. KISSINGER. I have been very moved as an individual by Academician Sakharov, who wrote 5 or 6 years ago a very lengthy declaration of his conception of human liberty and of the progress that at that time he felt was being made in the Soviet Union toward that goal. I am disappointed, as a member of the intellectual profession, that this progress has not continued, and I am certainly dismayed by the conditions that Academician Sakharov reports. And yet we as a country have to ask ourselves the question whether it should be the principal goal of American foreign policy to transform the domestic structure of societies with which we deal, or whether the principal exercise of our foreign policy should be directed toward affecting the foreign policy of those societies.

Now I recognize there is a certain connection between domestic policy and foreign policy. But if we adopt as a national proposition the view that we must transform the domestic structure of all countries with which we deal, even if the foreign policy of those countries is otherwise moving in a more acceptable direction, then we will find ourselves massively involved in every country in the world, and then many of the concerns expressed by Senator Symington and Senator Church of a constant American involvement everywhere will come to the fore again. Therefore, despite some very painful aspects in the Sakharov case, and despite the inevitable sympathies produced by my origin for the plight of minority groups that are denied the right of free emigration, I cannot in good conscience recommend as a principle of American foreign policy that our entire foreign policy should be made depedent on that particular aspect of the domestic structure of the Soviet Union.

We have in a semiofficial capacity pointed out to the Soviet leaders the unfortunate impact that some of these policies have on our opinion and on the general atmosphere of our relationship. As a result of these representations, the exit visa tax was suspended, and various lists that were given to me by various groups of special cases were receiving special attention, although I do not think this is the place to discuss that formally. But as a general proposition, painful as I find the Sakharov document, emotionally connected though I feel myself to him, I feel nevertheless that we must proceed on the course on which we are. And I continue to recommend MFN for the Soviet Union.

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Mr. KISSINGER. Senator, I think, first of all, that one has to distinguish between the various Communist countries in this respect. I do not think it is necessarily true—in fact, I do not think it is true at all—that détente means a clamping down in the countries of Eastern Europe. Many of the countries of Eastern Europe, for example, have advocated a European Security Conference precisely because they believe it gives them a greater possibility to develop their national identities. In several of these countries it has led, not to a change in the governmental structure, but to a greater—what we would call liberalization within this governmental structure.

Now, in the Soviet Union this trend has not always been the same, because détente sets up these contradictory tendencies.

I would like to remind you, however, Senator, that about 10 years ago it was axiomatic in the intellectual community and among students of foreign policy that the reason the Soviet system was able to maintain its authoritarian hold was because of its invocation of foreign danger, and that to the degree that the foreign danger diminished it would not be able to maintain the more repressive aspects of its system. And I believe that, in the long run, this will turn out to be a correct judgment, because, in a way, as we live in a world in which these countries become more related to the free countries and economically more interdependent, the pressures represented by Sakharov are going to become more numerous. And even if they are repressed in any 1- or 2-year period, in the long term one would think that it will be freer—it would be conducive to that—in this situation.

Now, what can we do specifically? This is a very difficult issue to answer in the abstract. There are some things we have already done, as I pointed out with respect to the exit tax. There are other things that will happen gradually. What is very difficult is to write as an explicit condition of an economic arrangement something that can look like an intrusion into domestic legislation. But I think we can use our influence, we can strengthen the trend, and we should not give up the principles for which we stand.

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Mr. KISSINGER. Well, again, Senator, one has to ask oneself under the contemporary circumstances whether a return to the cold war would improve the situation of the people concerned. In the 1930's of course, I was a part of that persecuted minority, so I am rather sensitive to that situation.

I must say I could have understood it, and I could understand it now as a historian, though the consequences would have been rather painful, if other countries had concentrated primarily on preventing military aggression by the Nazis and had attempted through a policy of preventing that aggression to change the system over a period of time. There is reason to believe that if deprived of foreign adventures, the Nazi system might have changed over a period of time.

What one has to balance in the case of the Soviet system is not that we can ever approve repression, or that we should not use our influence where we can to mitigate it. But we have to ask ourselves whether, by reducing the danger of war and forcing the Soviet system into a cooperative relationship with the rest of the world in the field of foreign policy, that will not over a period of time mitigate their system.

But it is a fine line which we have to walk here.

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Mr. KISSINGER. Senator, we don't disagree about the human problem, nor do we disagree as to the objective. The difficulty we face is, confronted with the capability on both sides of exterminating mankind, whether we should pursue measures to reduce the danger of war and begin a more civilized discourse with a system of government whose internal methods we cannot approve, or whether we should delay this until they commit themselves to a change in their own system—which they may consider so intolerable in the short term that they will not pursue the measures of détente that we are intending to carry forward.

It is very hard to determine this in the abstract. We cannot be indifferent to the denial of human liberty, but we cannot, at the same time, so insist on transformations in the domestic structure of the Soviet system that we give up the general evolution that we are hopefully starting.

U.S. GOVERNMENT SIGNALS TO MOSCOW

Senator MCGOVERN. Can I break in there, Dr. Kissinger, to ask a related question? Have you or other members of our Government signaled Moscow that, in effect, we are willing to overlook the persecution of their writers and thinkers and scientists in return for continued negotiations on arms and other diplomatic matters?

Mr. KISSINGER. Senator McGovern, the opposite is true. The only reason why I do not go into greater detail about what we have discussed on a semiofficial basis is that that would then deprive it of its semiofficial character. But I can assure you that not only have we not signaled to them that we are prepared to overlook it, but we have signaled them exactly the opposite—but in a context in which we believe we have a better chance of bringing about the result.

September 26, 1973 - Secretary Kissinger, USUN Press Conference

Q. Mr. Secretary, this is not patently your talk with Andrei Gromyko, which you ruled out, but I would like to ask a question about his public speech in the Assembly, in which he demands that Western nations stop meddling in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union -- and I think something in connection principally with the emigration policy of the Soviet Union.

The manner in which he spoke of it left us uncertain as to whether this really meant any lessening of the spirit of detente or whether it was simply a public gesture in a private game. Could you --

A. Ladies and gentlemen, during my confirmation hearings, I was asked extensively about this issue. It is also an issue about which I plan to make a formal statement sometime in the next month or six weeks. But for now, let me reiterate what I said then.

The United States, of course, has its own deeply held views about the human values at stake -- both in emigration policies and in internal policies.

The foreign policy question we face is:

First, the degree to which our foreign policy can directly affect others.

And secondly, the alternatives we in fact confront if our direct actions are ineffective.

There is a great tendency to assume that everything that has been achieved is now automatically permanent and can be drawn upon as if its capital were inexhaustible.

We have taken the position that we would not, as a Government, take a formal, public position, but we have also taken the position that insofar as we have influence in other ways, we would use it to the limit of our capabilities.

Now you are all familiar with the fact that the emigration tax is not being enforced. On an unofficial basis we have brought many hardship cases that were submitted to us by various organizations here to the attention of various officials. Many of those have been permitted to emigrate.

So the choice we have to make is between a public stance and the influence that our general relationship gives us.

We believe that we have been quite effective. But we should keep in mind that there is a point beyond which one cannot press a situation as it exists.

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Q. You say there is a point beyond which the detente should not be pressed. I wonder if you could outline what you think might happen if the Congress revokes or blocks the Most Favored Nation status for the Soviet Union in the new trade bill.

A. I don't want to speculate about Soviet actions. I have stated previously that the Most Favored Nation clause was part of a general arrangement with the Soviet Union in negotiations extending over a period of many years. If now the Most Favored Nation clause is blocked, then the most serious question has to be raised about the degree to which other countries -- in this case the Soviet Union -- can rely on a complex negotiation and about the performance of the United States, over a period of time, of its commitment. There was no reason to suppose at the time that this Most Favored Nation issue was discussed with the Soviet Union, that the type of problem that is now blocking it could be the subject of conditions in Congress. It had never been so used in any previous case where Most Favored Nation status was requested for a Communist country. Therefore, it would certainly be a significant setback in the policy that we are pursuing.

KISSINGER ADDRESS AT PACEM IN TERRIS CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 8, 1973

Until recently the goals of détente were not an issue. The necessity of shifting from confrontation toward negotiation seemed so overwhelming that goals beyond the settlement of international disputes were never raised. But now progress has been made—and already taken for granted. We are engaged in an intense debate on whether we should make changes in Soviet society a precondition for further progress or indeed for following through on commitments already made. The cutting edge of this problem is the congressional effort to condition most-favored-nation (MFN) trade status for other countries on changes in their domestic systems.

This is a genuine moral dilemma. There are genuine moral concerns on both sides of the argument. So let us not address this as a debate between those who are morally sensitive and those who are not, between those who care for justice and those who are oblivious to humane values. The attitude of the American people and government has been made emphatically clear on countless occasions in ways that have produced effective results. The exit tax on emigration is not being collected, and we have received assurances that it will not be reapplied; hardship cases submitted to the Soviet Government are being given specific attention; the rate of Jewish emigration has been in the tens of thousands, where it was once a trickle. We will continue our vigorous efforts on these matters.

But the real debate goes far beyond this: Should we now tie demands which were never raised during negotiations to agreements that have already been concluded? Should we require as a formal condition internal changes that we heretofore sought to foster in an evolutionary manner?

Let us remember what the MFN question specifically involves. The very term "most favored nation" is misleading in its implication of preferential treatment. What we are talking about is whether to allow *normal* economic relations to develop—of the kind we now have with over 100 other countries and which the Soviet Union enjoyed until 1951. The issue is whether to abolish discriminatory trade restrictions that were imposed at the height of the cold war. Indeed, at that time the Soviet Government discouraged commerce because it feared the domestic impact of normal trading relations with the West on its society.

The demand that Moscow modify its domestic policy as a precondition for MFN or détente was never made while we were negotiating; now it is inserted after both sides have carefully shaped an overall mosaic. Thus it raises questions about our entire bilateral relationship.

Finally, the issue affects not only our relationship with the Soviet Union but also with many other countries whose internal structures we find incompatible with our own. Conditions imposed on one country could inhibit expanding relations with others, such as the People's Republic of China.

We shall never condone the suppression of fundamental liberties. We shall urge humane principles and use our influence to promote justice. But the issue comes down to the limits of such efforts. How hard can we press without provoking the Soviet leadership into returning to practices in its foreign policy that increase international tensions? Are we ready to face the crises and increased defense budgets that a return to cold war conditions would spawn? And will this encourage full emigration or enhance the well-being or nourish the hope for liberty of the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? Is it détente that has prompted repression—or is it détente that has generated the ferment and the demand for openness which we are now witnessing?

For half a century we have objected to Communist efforts to alter the domestic structures of other countries. For a generation of cold war we sought to ease the risks produced by competing ideologies. Are we now to come full circle and insist on domestic compatibility as a condition of progress?

These questions have no easy answers. The government may underestimate the margin of concessions available to us. But a fair debate must admit that they are genuine questions, the answers to which could affect the fate of all of us.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON 12/3/73

President Nixon
Speaker Carl Albert regarding
Trade Bill, Dec. 3, 1973

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am writing to request that the Trade Reform Bill, H.R. 10710, be rescheduled for floor action by the House of Representatives before the Christmas recess. I believe this legislation is essential if we are to improve relations with our trading partners and to deal effectively with certain domestic trade related problems.

You kindly deferred action on the bill some weeks ago in response to a request I felt compelled to make because of diplomatic considerations involving the cease fire in the Middle East. Since then, the prospects for fruitful negotiations in that area have been considerably advanced. With this immediate crisis hopefully abated, I believe the House should now move to take up the urgent business of trade.

Even as I urge prompt action, however, I must express my continuing concern about certain provisions of Title IV and a probable amendment. These provisions would effectively prevent both the extension of non-discriminatory tariff treatment and of United States Government credits to certain Communist countries unless those countries follow a policy which allowed unrestricted emigration. In my opinion, if these provisions were enacted into law, they would have a damaging effect on the progress this Administration has made to establish normal relations with those countries. Not only could they unduly limit our economic relations with such countries, but they would slow down the progress we are making through diplomatic channels on the emigration issue. I, too, am concerned for the future of those citizens in the countries involved who may want to emigrate, but I do not believe that that future can be assured by U.S. law.

You [illegible] few years, indicated your support and encouragement for my efforts to reduce the level of tension in our relations with the Communist countries, to open up new channels of dialogue with old adversaries and to continue our work to strengthen the fabric of international peace. There is no higher purpose to which we can dedicate our energies than to the task of bringing a lasting peace to our world. However, the construction of a durable peace requires all of us to weigh carefully the consequences of any action we take that could upset the delicate balance of international movement which is now underway.

I believe this Government can work with the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and other Communist states, both to encourage the settlement of longstanding disputes in areas like the Middle East and to consolidate a lasting world peace. But this process requires patience and mutual restraint. The proposed amendment to the Trade Bill cannot help that process. It carries unacceptably high risks of endangering it.

I would therefore urge, in a spirit of compromise, that the House follow a statesmanlike course and vote to drop Title IV so that these matters could be considered in a more deliberate manner at another time. If the House does not follow this course, I shall endeavor to see that Senate consideration of these measures will result in a satisfactory resolution of this issue.

However, should this matter still not reach a satisfactory resolution, I want you to know that I would find the legislation unacceptable. It would be tragic if a satisfactory resolution of this matter, which is so important to our continuing efforts to establish a durable peace made it necessary to set back other important goals served by H.R. 10710.

Sincerely,

RN

Hon. Carl Albert
Speaker
US House of Representatives

PRESIDENT NIXON'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

JANUARY 30, 1974

As the Senate considers this legislation, I would draw its attention particularly to provisions added in the House which would seriously impede our efforts to achieve more harmonious international relationships. These provisions would effectively prevent both the extension of nondiscriminatory tariff treatment and of credits to certain Communist countries unless they followed a policy which allowed unrestricted emigration. I am convinced that such a prohibition would only make more difficult the kind of cooperative effort between the United States and other governments which is necessary if we are to work together for peace in the Middle East and throughout the world. I am confident that by working with the Congress we can find a solution to this problem that will avoid a major setback in our peacemaking efforts.

KISSINGER STATEMENT TO SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE MARCH 7, 1974

Since detente is rooted in a recognition of differences — and based on the prevention of disaster — there are sharp limits to what we can insist upon as part of this relationship. We have a right to demand responsible international behavior from the USSR; we did not hesitate to make this clear during the Middle East crisis. We also have a right to demand that agreements we sign are observed in good faith.

But with respect to basic changes in the Soviet system, the issue is not whether we condone what the USSR does internally; it is whether and to what extent we can risk other objectives — and especially the building of a structure for peace — for these domestic changes. I believe that we cannot, and that to do so would obscure, and in the long run defeat, what must remain our overriding objective — the prevention of nuclear war.

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In none of the commentaries on the Moscow summit was there any significant opposition voice raised against the course we were pursuing in the economic sphere. It seemed to command the most widespread understanding and approval. Certainly, the question of the Soviet domestic structure was not cited as an obstacle to the processes we had set in motion. Thus to bring the issue to the fore now will involve profound questions of whether we negotiated in good faith.

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Thus, the major impact of the continued denial of MFN status to the Soviet Union would be political, not economic. MFN was withdrawn in 1951 largely as a political act. Our unwillingness to remove this discrimination now would call into question our intent to move toward an improved relationship. It would jeopardize a moderate evolution in all areas, including the Middle East. It would prevent the implementation of the US-Soviet Trade Agreement, as well as the Lend-Lease accord — involving repayment of over $700 million to the United States.

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We are aware, of course, that the intended purpose of this amendment is not to prevent the extension of non-discriminatory status or to prohibit all credits to the USSR, but to assist those whose wish to emigrate from the Soviet Union has been frustrated. Yet, in practical terms, I believe the amendment would prevent the extension of non-discriminatory tariff treatment to the Soviet Union and several other countries. For these reasons, we are opposed to this amendment and to Title IV as it has emerged from the House.

The amendment, if adopted, will almost certainly prove counter-productive: it will not enhance emigration but stop it altogether. The experience of the past five years demonstrates that as our relations with the Soviet Union improve, emigration rises as well. Over the past five years, there have been breakthroughs in Soviet emigration practices unimaginable during the years of confrontation. In March 1973 the President was assured by Soviet authorities that current emigration policy, which had brought about a significant increase in the rate of emigration, would be continued indefinitely. The President was also assured that the "education tax" would be waived across-the-board. Despite complicating international developments, both of these commitments have thus far been fully met. Some 33,500 Soviet Jews arrived in Israel during 1973, putting the total for 1969-1973 over the 81,000 mark.

The present emigration picture is not as bright as we would like; it has never been our view that the status quo is satisfactory. The administration of Soviet emigration policy often seems arbitrary. Some 1,300 individuals currently in the USSR have been denied permission to emigrate to Israel. But the basic fact remains that as we have moved from confrontation to negotiation, emigration has increased from the sporadic trickle of the 1960s to a relatively steady flow of some 2,500 a month in the 1970s.